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Governor
Deval Patrick



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SEARCH

The Administration	Constituent Services	Press Office	Agenda	Legislation & Executive Orders	Get Involved	
--------------------	----------------------	--------------	--------	--------------------------------	--------------	--

[Home](#) > [Press Office](#) > [Press Releases](#) >

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PATRICK-MURRAY ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES \$1.56 MILLION TO SUPPORT PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

Lieutenant Governor Murray highlights completion of 18 month Regional Network Pilot Program; Funds targeted to transform service delivery for at-risk residents

WORCESTER - Thursday, September 23, 2010 - Continuing the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to ending homelessness in Massachusetts, Lieutenant Governor Timothy P. Murray today announced \$1.56 million in funds to support the Administration's Regional Networks Program. At an event to commemorate the completion of the 18-month pilot program, Lieutenant Governor Murray was joined by members of seven local United Way chapters in Massachusetts, who are partnering with the Administration to provide \$560,000 of the \$1.56 million that will help sustain the state's ten Regional Networks Programs.

"We are fully committed to developing ways to improve services for homeless families and those in danger of becoming homeless," said Governor Deval Patrick. "Today, thanks to the leadership of Lieutenant Governor Murray, the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness, and our regional partners, we are effectively working to fulfill our goals of preventing and ending homelessness, and ensuring all individuals and families have the opportunity to access quality and affordable housing."

Lieutenant Governor Murray, who chairs the Governor's Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness (ICHH), launched ten regional networks in December 2008 to serve every community in the state. Of the ten networks, eight were funded with \$8 million in state resources and two with \$1.3 million in support from the Paul and Phyllis Fireman Charitable Foundation.

"By working with the Regional Networks across the state, we have pulled together resources to help individuals and families stay housed and help those who are homeless find permanent housing," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "We value the continued work of all of our partners in this effort, including the Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation, and we look forward to working with the United Ways to move ahead with new funding and assistance that will help support and sustain the work and mission of the Regional Networks."

Today's \$1.56 million announcement will continue the momentum developed over the last 18 months and also continue the work the networks have outlined in each region. By partnering with the United Way system and leveraging federal funds through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), this funding will provide sustainability for the networks that have proven success in preventing and ending homelessness.

"This ongoing commitment by the Administration will further boost our homelessness prevention and re-housing efforts and will yield long-term dividends for the Commonwealth," said Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) Undersecretary Tina Brooks. "By targeting funds this way and by creating more affordable housing opportunities for extremely low-income families, we can further our mission to strengthen communities and put an end to homelessness in Massachusetts".

"Because no one should be homeless, United Ways of Massachusetts stand firmly with the Administration in a commitment to end homelessness by contributing resources and expertise to prevent homelessness wherever possible and to rapidly house those families and individuals who are currently homeless. By uniting our efforts, we will assure our success in ending homelessness," said the leaders of the United Ways of Massachusetts in a joint statement.

Since the Regional Networks were created, the Patrick-Murray Administration has consolidated the emergency shelter system into DHCD through the administration's Article 87 proposal, supported by the legislature. This realignment has helped to build a new delivery system for homelessness prevention, emergency shelter and sustainable housing.

The Regional Networks were designed to better coordinate, integrate and implement innovative services focused on securing permanent housing options for homeless individuals and families, and ultimately lessen the need for emergency assistance shelters. By integrating and streamlining regionally-based networks of stakeholders, greater coordination and local innovations have been achieved to improve the Commonwealth's ability to end homelessness.

"The work of the Regional Networks proves that coordination and collaboration is critical in our efforts to prevent and end homelessness more effectively," said Liz Curtis Rogers, Executive Director of the ICHH. "The pilot program developed the platform upon which we can now institutionalize real reform with a laser focus on the needs of homeless and at-risk individuals and families across the Commonwealth."

Since the networks were first launched, funding has focused on implementing innovative prevention and re-housing services, and expanding upon already proven best practices for housing chronically homeless adults. With the 18-month pilot program lending further credence to a housing first model, the networks have been effectively able to use flexible client assistance funds to prevent homelessness and rapidly re-house 376 chronically homeless individuals. In addition, networks were able to divert hundreds of homeless families to housing instead of shelter, and prevented thousands of families from becoming homeless in the first place.

For example, the Boston Regional Network diverted 150 homeless families, while 2,337 at-risk families were prevented from becoming homeless and 56 homeless families were re-housed from the shelter and motel systems. Networks will continue to coordinate and collaborate to build upon the innovations proven to be most effective at preventing and ending homelessness.

The ICHH Regional Networks include:

- Boston Regional Network
- Cape & Islands Regional Network
- Merrimack Valley Regional Network
- Metro Boston Regional Network
- Metro West Regional Network
- North Shore Regional Network
- South Coast Regional Network
- South Shore Regional Network
- Western MA Regional Network
- Worcester County Regional Network

Governor Patrick issued Executive Order Number 492 on November 18, 2007, which reinstated the ICHH. Lieutenant Governor Murray chairs the Council, which is working to implement the recommendations from the Massachusetts Commission to End Homelessness. The Governor first authorized the Commission to End Homelessness to design a strategic plan to end homelessness in Massachusetts by 2013. The Commission released a Five-Year Plan on January 9, 2008, and charged the ICHH with implementing the recommendations. To learn more, visit www.mass.gov/governor/ichhh.

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